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Tobacco Use Among Disparate Populations

National Statistics and Trends

- **Tobacco use is the single most avoidable cause of disease, disability, and death in the United States.** Tobacco use and complications caused by tobacco were the Nation's leading cause of death 2004. Cigarette smoking is responsible for more than 440,000 deaths each year.¹
- Prevalence of cigarette smoking is **highest among American Indians/Alaska Natives** (40.8%), followed by whites (23.6%), African Americans (22.4%), Hispanics (16.7%), and Asians [excluding Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders] (13.3%).¹
- Cigarette smoking estimates are **highest for adults with a General Education Development (GED) diploma** (42.3%) or 9-11 years of education (34.1%), and lowest for adults with an undergraduate college degree (12.1%) or a graduate college degree (7.2%).¹
- Cigarette smoking is **more common among adults who live below the poverty level** (32.9%) than among those living at or above the poverty level (22.2%).¹
- Cigarette smoking is a major cause of disease and death in each of the four population groups studied in this report. **African Americans currently bear the greatest health burden. Differences in the magnitude of disease risk are directly related to differences in patterns of smoking.**²
- **No single factor determines patterns of tobacco use among racial/ethnic minority groups;** these patterns are the result of complex interactions of multiple factors, such as socioeconomic status, cultural characteristics, acculturation, stress, biological elements, targeted advertising, price of tobacco products, and varying capacities of communities to mount effective tobacco control initiatives.²
- **In 2003, current cigarette smoking rates increased steadily with age up to age 20,** from 1.7 percent at age 12 to 26.4 percent at age 17. The **rate peaked at age 20 (44.1 percent).** After age 22, rates generally declined with age: 30.9 percent for 30 to 34 year olds; 31.1 percent for 40 to 44 year olds; 25.0 percent for 50 to 54 year olds; 16.5 percent for 60 to 64 year olds; and 10.0 percent for persons aged 65 or older.³
- In general, smoking rates among **Mexican American adults** increase as they learn and adopt the values, beliefs, and norms of American culture.³
- Nationwide, notable racial/ethnic differences existed with regard to brand of cigarettes smoked most often in the past month. In **2003, 43.8 percent of white smokers and 58.5 percent of Hispanic smokers reported smoking Marlboro cigarettes.** Among **black smokers, 7.2 percent smoked Marlboro cigarettes, while 46.0 percent smoked Newport cigarettes.**³
- More than **75% of middle and high school African-American students** who smoke reported using **mentholated brands.**³

State Statistics

Prevalence

- The estimated overall **prevalence of cigarette smoking among adult Arizonans in 2002 was 20%.** That rate has been stable over time as shown by the results of the previous two Arizona Adult Tobacco Surveys and the last 12 Arizona Behavior Risk Factor Surveys.⁴
- Arizona is below the national prevalence rates for tobacco users. According to the 2002 Adult Tobacco Survey, smoking prevalence is highest for **Non-Hispanic Whites (22%). African Americans have a 21% prevalence rate followed by 15% for Native Americans, and 13%**

prevalence rate for Hispanics. Asian Pacific Islanders had the lowest prevalence rates (12%).⁴

- Smoking prevalence rates for **18-24 year olds show a significant increase (21% in 1999 to 29% in 2002)**. This increase in smoking among young adults mirrors national trends of high rates in this age group and, as is the case nationally, within **Arizona the rate is mostly driven by the high rates for males (33% in AZ).**⁴
- **Smoking prevalence decreases with increasing education**, from a high of about 27% amongst those reporting less than a high school education, to a low of 12% amongst college graduates. This pattern has been consistent over all three years of the survey.⁴

Cessation Services

- Although a high percentage of smokers want to quit (43% reported making a quit attempt in the past year), only **23% used any form of pharmaceutical assistance, and even fewer (7%) used other types of cessation services such as classes, clinics, self-help materials, or counseling.**⁴

Arizona's Youth And Tobacco Use

- In 2003, **approximately 15% of middle school students and 26% of high school students** in Arizona were current tobacco users (had used a tobacco product during the 30 days prior to the survey).⁵
- Among ethnic groups, **American Indians reported the highest current tobacco use rates in both middle and high school (28% and 52%, respectively)**. In middle school, African Americans (19.5%) ranked second and Hispanics (17.7%) ranked third. Among high school students, African Americans (27.2%) had the second-highest tobacco use rates. Asians (22.7%) ranked third.⁴
- Youth who live with someone who uses tobacco are at greatest risk for secondhand exposure and for taking up tobacco use. More established smokers reported living with someone who smokes than other smokers and non-smokers. Among **established smokers, 62% in middle school and 71% in high school reported living with a smoker.**⁴

Secondhand Smoke Exposure

- In all grades, **African American students scored the highest** (49% for 4th –5th grades and 53% for 6th – 8th grades) in reporting they live with someone who smokes. This is consistent with national data reflecting African Americans are the least likely ethnic group to have smokefree homes.⁵
- **“Ash To Ashes” Media Campaign** was created for Arizona's African American community. It is designed as a tobacco awareness and education program addressing issues such as health complications, secondhand smoke exposure harms, and stop smoking services. This program is facilitated through several African American faith-based community organizations.⁶
- 77% of **students who lived with smoker** reported exposure in a room at least 1x during the week compared to 43% who did not live with a smoker.⁷
- **58% of students who live with smokers were exposed on 3 or more occasions** compared to 17% of those who do not live with smokers.⁷
- **63% of students who live with a smoker reported they were exposed to SHS in a car at least 1x** in the past week compared to 20% of students who did not live with a smoker.⁷
- **Repeated exposure in a car was higher for students living with smokers (42%)** compared to 8% for students who did not live with smokers.⁷

References

¹ Office of Smoking and Health, "Targeting Tobacco Use: The Nation's Leading Cause of Death 2004, At-A-Glance Summary," CDC.

² Surgeon General's report, "Tobacco Use Among U.S. Racial/Ethnic Minority Groups," At-A-Glance Report, CDC. CDC.

³ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. *2003 National Survey On Drug Use and Health: Results*. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies; 2003. Accessed: February 2004.

⁴ 2002 Adult Tobacco Survey, Arizona Department of Health Services, Tobacco Education Program.

⁵ 2003 Arizona Youth Tobacco Survey, Arizona Department of Health Services, Tobacco Education Prevention Program.

⁶ Ashes To Ashes African American Media Campaign, Arizona Department of Health Services, Tobacco Education Prevention Program.

⁷ "Student's Report of Exposure To Smoking in the Family Unit," Arizona Department of Health Services, Tobacco Education Prevention Program, Square One, August 6, 2004.